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Bangalore Mirror ON SUNDAY

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FESTIVE FRENZY

Citizens from various areas report neither did ban on non-green firecrackers work, nor did many follow designated time for bursting crackers

PAGE 2

WASTE NOT

Solid waste treatment facilities across four zones on outskirts of Bengaluru, each spanning 100 acres, get green signal

PAGE 4

Importance of Automated Cardiac Defibrillators in public spaces, CPR training for transport corporation employees stressed as BMTC driver dies of heart attack

THE CRY OF A HEAVY HEART

Doctors say early access to AEDs can save lives

| Rachana Ramesh
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

A Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) bus driver lost his life due to a heart attack whilst operating the vehicle on Wednesday in the northern periphery of the city. The incident has brought to the fore the dire need of training transport corporation employees and citizens on performing Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Doctors have also highlighted the need for Automated Cardiac Defibrillators (AEDs) in public places, as these mechanisms help aid in increasing survival rates significantly during emergencies such as cardiac arrests.

"Sudden cardiac death is one of the presentations of a heart attack. Most heart attack patients get the time to reach a hospital. However, 20 percent of the patients present with a case of cardiac arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat that can cause the heart to beat too fast, too slow, or with an irregular rhythm). In these cases, early access to AEDs is crucial. This needs easy access to AEDs in public places, and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 >>

"Our wages have not been increased adequately but our bus routes and daily targets have been increased with the rise in population of the city

—BMTC worker

Wilt power

Progress report on tree transplantation shows success rate of exercise is just around 10%

| Garima Prasher
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Ltd's (BMRCL) report card of translocation of trees from its project area has failed to improve over time.

The corporation's latest progress report on tree transplantation shows that the success rate of the exercise is barely touching the 10% mark.

As per BMRCL's recent quarterly report (October to December 2023), while 280 trees were transplanted between July 2021 and July 2022 from its various project sites across the city, only 28 are now showing signs of survival. More than 250 transplanted trees (nearly 90%) have dried up.

This outcome appears to be in contrast with transplantation work being done by Karnataka Rail Infrastructure Development Company Limited (K-RIDE). The agency, in its environmental impact assessment report released in July this year, had achieved a success rate of 62%.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 >>

3 THINGS TO DO

01 Learn on

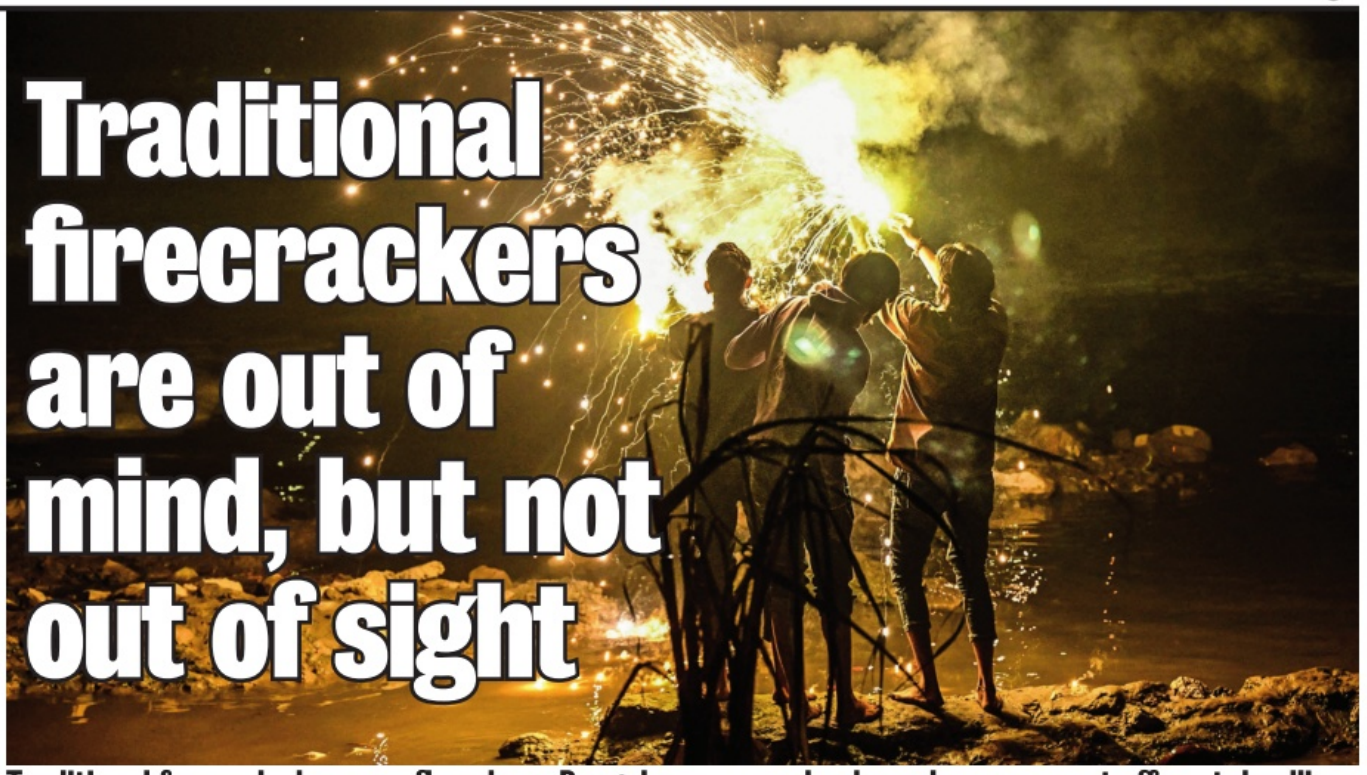
Join in for 'AIVS–AI for Sound and Video Synthesis,' with Robert B Lisek. This hands-on workshop explores video and sound synthesis. During this session, one can gain practical experience in implementing modulation, phase shifting, harmonics, and chaotic systems; explore key machine learning algorithms and their applications in artistic programming; apply artificial intelligence for the development of new artistic works and innovative applications; and more. **Where: Science Gallery, Ganganaga When: November 10, 11 am to 1 pm**

02 Journey of love & loss

Join in for the November meetup of Urban Solace Book Lovers' Club for the discussion of Kalavathi Raj's book "30 Years in the Searing Sun." The book reveals candid confessions about an alcoholic father who paved the way for his dejected daughter to encounter seven different men till she finally met her dream husband. Come and find out how she crawled the bad chapters of her lonely life to find what was missing and if Kalavathi found what every woman looks for—the right man. **Where: Urban Solace; When: November 10, 11:30 am to 1 pm**

03 Musical act

Immerse yourselves in 'Sangeet Manapmaan,' a sangeet natak performed by Bharat Natya Sanshodhan Mandir from Pune. The story is of a young and penniless general, Dhairyadhar, who is refused by the proud Bhamini, a proud heiress. But she soon repents and presents herself disguised as a poor damsel in the wilderness, only to be rescued by Dhairyadhar. Their scenes are almost copies of the lago-Roderic scenes in Othello. Manapmaan ends where Othello would begin—but with Brabantio's blessings! **Where: Ranga Shankara; When: November 10, 7:30 pm**



Traditional firecrackers are out of mind, but not out of sight

Traditional fireworks ban was flop show: Bengalureans say loud crackers were set off past deadlines

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Despite Karnataka government's ban on traditional firecrackers during Deepavali, their use during and after the festival in the city has been rampant. Citizens from various parts of Bengaluru say the ban was a flop show, and regular firecrackers continued to dominate the scene in the absence of strict implementation.

"Traditional firecrackers were sold and used unchecked during Deepavali in our area. They continue to be used during festivals following Deepavali such as Chhath Pooja. While the night of October 31 was louder, early Friday morning was also noisy due to non-green firecrackers used during Chhath Pooja," said a resident of Yelahanka.

Citizens also underlined that the designated period of 8 pm to 10 pm was also not followed, and deafening Deepavali continued till 1 am in certain areas. "In our area the intensity of the sound was high, and thus it was evident that people were using traditional firecrackers. Moreover, firecrackers went on well above the 10 pm mark," said Nivedita Shetty, a resident of Rajajinagar.

Festive advisory not adhered to by people

Notably, the state government imposed strict restrictions on the manufacture, sale, and use of non-green firecrackers during Deepavali. As per the notification issued by the government before the festival, only green crackers were permitted. Even the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) and the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) had issued advisories and directed officials to inform the public about stringent action against those found selling or using regular firecrackers.

Karnataka Forest Minister had also urged people to celebrate safe and eco-friendly Deepavali. The government had issued an order that the noise level should stay within the 125 decibel limit and fireworks should be restricted to 8-10 pm. These directions were based on the Supreme Court's order in 2018, banning the use of fireworks and allowing only green crackers.

Ironically enough, all these advisories were not adhered to. "We are a group of animal feeders, and on October 31, we had to wait till late at night for loud noise to stop. When it did not stop by 10.30 pm, we called the police, as the animals would have come out from hiding only after the noise had stopped. Residents in our area were bursting 'firecracker bombs', which was deafening. Only traditional firecrackers were used," said a resident of HSR Layout.

Need for strict action

Citizens also stated that only verbal warnings were issued by the police for not following the rules, leading to no change in the situation on the ground. "Most of the time, police are just looking at issuing warnings. When Hoysala arrives, those bursting traditional crackers or bursting crackers after 10 pm flee the scene. However, minutes after the police leave the spot, the miscreants start it all again. Police should consider filing NCRs in response to complaints raised by the public. There should be some repercussions for not adhering to these rules," said Sadhana Hegde, a resident of Bommanahalli.

Why use green crackers?

While traditional fireworks emit over 160 decibels of sound, the noise from green crackers is limited to 125 decibels. Green crackers are also manufactured using less polluting raw materials and do not contain harmful materials such as barium, lithium, and arsenic—compounds that are found in traditional firecrackers.

Green crackers are also composed of elements that reduce emission while bursting and contain water vapour, which does not allow dust to rise. Green crackers are identified by their QR code and a CSIR-NEERI-certified green logo on the packaging.

Gold, cash worth ₹15.15 crore stolen from jeweller's residence in city

Approximately Rs 15.15 crore worth of gold ornaments and cash were reported stolen from the residence of a gold jeweller residing in Hosahalli Extension, Vijayanagar. The complainant reported the theft at Vijayanagar Police Station after discovering the valuables missing upon his return from a religious trip to Gujarat. The victim reported that he and his family had left for Gujarat on November 1 at around 5 pm for the Deva Jatra festival, leaving their home in the care of a security guard, Namraj, who had been employed in their shop for some time.

According to the complaint, Namraj, a security guard hailing from Nepal, had been staying in the residence's parking area with his wife for the past six months. In addition to his security duties, Namraj helped with household tasks, including watering plants, which granted him access to various areas of the home. Over time, he became familiar with the valuables stored in the house. Upon returning to Bengaluru on Thursday at 3:30 am, the complainant discovered that cash totalling Rs 40,80,000 and gold ornaments weighing approximately 18.4 kg, belonging to family members and his business, were missing. The stolen valuables included family gold ornaments weighing approximately 2,835 grams, gold ornaments belonging to relatives totalling around 2,790g, and business gold stock, including shop inventory, pawned jewellery, and surplus ornaments, amounting to about 12,812g.

The suspect, Namraj, was not found on the premises, and his mobile phone was switched off. The police have launched an investigation. **— BMB**

Woman murdered at her house over land dispute

A 44-year-old woman was found murdered at her house in Hongasandra in the early hours of Friday. The victim is identified as Jayamma. The Bommanahalli police have arrested two individuals connected to the case. According to police reports, the murder was allegedly fuelled by a financial conflict within the family. Jayamma, who had recently sold a piece of land valued at approximately Rs.30 lakh, had been quarrelling with her son, who accused her of withholding the money. The son reportedly demanded funds from the sale to invest in his own property, escalating tensions between them.

The police suspect an acquaintance of Jayamma was also involved in the crime. Following the incident, Jayamma's body was taken to St John's Hospital for a postmortem examination, and a formal case has been registered with Bommanahalli police. Police officials stated that the motive appears to be tied to the land sale and financial disagreements within the family, but further investigation is needed to reach a definitive conclusion. **— BMB**

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Motorists struggle as culvert work drags on

Pedestrians on Mosque Road face ongoing hardships due to roadwork delays; BBMP is urged to speed up construction

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Pedestrians and motorists are facing significant challenges due to the prolonged delays in the ongoing culvert development on Mosque Road in Frazer Town. As construction progresses slowly, both drivers and pedestrians are experiencing considerable difficulties, especially when commuting with children to and from school.

Residents have complained that the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Stormwater Drains Department began work on the culvert for the stormwater drain on Mosque Road six months ago, but it remains unfinished. "The BBMP authorities told us that the development of the culvert will be completed in 50 days but it is still incomplete even after six months. The condition of the road that is filled with potholes and craters is worse. The movement of vehicles becomes slow during the peak hours thus causing a lot of inconvenience to the motorists. The BBMP contractor is yet to complete the work on one side of the culvert," said Umera Faisal, a resident at Mosque Road.

A resident, pleading anonymity, said that she has been finding it tough to commute on Mosque Road due to traffic jams at the culvert that has been under development for more than six months. "I appeal to the BBMP Stormwater Drains Department to expedite the ongoing development of the culvert for the benefit of thousands of motorists to commute on this road. I don't understand why the BBMP contractor is taking so long to complete the work on the culvert. It will be a great help," said the resident.

> **"I appeal to BBMP to expedite the ongoing development of the culvert for the benefit of thousands of motorists to commute on this road**
> – Resident

Demanding the BBMP authorities to complete the ongoing work without any delay, Habiba Subban, Organising Secretary of Fraser Town Resident Welfare Association, said that she has been in touch with the BBMP Storm Water Drains Department engineers and the contractor. "The contractor told me that he would complete the work before the Dasara festival. Now that the Dasara festival and even the Deepavali festival are over, the work remains incomplete. Residents at Mosque Road and motorists have been suffering a lot due to the delay in completing the culvert work," said Habiba.

Ongoing culvert work disrupts traffic flow

Meanwhile, the BBMP Assistant Engineer (Stormwater Drains) said the development of the culvert has been taken at an estimated cost of Rs 78 lakh. "The work is progressing slowly because of the ongoing railway work. The people working at the railway track are pumping water and silt into the stormwater drain. We need around 20 days to complete the culvert work," said the Assistant Engineer.

State greenlights 4 waste treatment plants for B'luru's future

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The state government has authorised the construction of solid waste treatment facilities across four zones on the outskirts of Bengaluru, each spanning 100 acres. This project aims to provide a long-term solution to the city's ongoing waste management challenges. An official said, "Bengaluru Urban District, including BBMP (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike), will be divided into four zones, each managed by a different contractor, to streamline waste collection and disposal from households to treatment facilities. To fulfil the increasing demands of Silicon City over the next 30 years, scientific waste disposal systems are being constructed in the city's outside districts. Four waste management units will be set up in these zones."

BBMP covers an area of 714 square kilometres and serves a population of 14.4 million. On average, the city generates 5,500 tons of waste daily, with an annual expenditure of Rs.1,000 crore on collection, disposal, and treatment. Despite these efforts, proper waste disposal and processing remain a challenge, leaving the waste issue unresolved. Sources said that the government has approved the invitation of tenders for four packages, based on tipping fees, for the collection and management of waste over 25 years. The city's eight zones will be divided into four packages for efficient management.

An official said, "The plan has been discussed in the technical and sub-committees of the Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML), and an action plan has been formulated. Currently, 100 acres each have been identified near Gollahalli along the NICE Road in the southern direction and Doddaballapur in the northern direction for the construction of these facilities. Land search is ongoing for the eastern and western zones. If government land is unavailable, the government has granted permission for the purchase of private land at the price determined by district officials."

Tipping fees for waste generators

It has been decided that user charges will be collected from waste generators and paid as tipping fees to contractors. According to estimates, user fees might bring in about 500 crore a year. BBMP will use its own money to make up for the shortfall if the tipping fees are greater than the user fees that were collected. Waste management initiatives will be funded with funds authorised under the Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0.

Termination of power generation agreements

It may be noted that BSWML had signed agreements with several companies for the construction of seven waste-to-energy plants. Of these, only KPCL (Karnataka Power Corporation Limited) has established a plant that generates 11.5 MW of power from 600 metric tons of RDF (Refuse derived fuel) waste. Other companies, except GAIL (Gas Authority of India Limited), have shown delays in execution, leading to the cancellation of agreements with these firms.

Cost of waste collection and processing

"Currently, BBMP spends Rs.3,699 per ton for waste collection and disposal. Under the new system, the selected contractor will receive Rs.2,343 per ton for collection and transportation, and Rs.650 per ton for processing and disposal, resulting in savings of Rs.706 per ton. A total investment of Rs.701 crore will be made for waste collection and transportation," said an official.

Coordination committee for land handover

To expedite the handover of land required for the integrated solid waste management facilities, the government has formed a coordination committee chaired by the Chief Secretary.

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Pothole trouble

Convent Road

The condition of the Convent Road is quite dismal, with potholes riddling its surface.

Road ruin

Varthur

The road near Aditya Esquina in Varthur is in poor condition.

Pathway blocked

Yelahanka

Pavement on Yelahanka New Town's 'A' Cross Road is illegally encroached with a temporary building and construction materials, blocking the public walkway.

VIJAY KARNATAKA KANNADA HABBA

Grand celebration of culture, art, and tradition

PICS: KS SRIDHAR

The much-anticipated 'Vijay Karnataka Kannada Habba' took off on a grand note on Saturday at the Jnana Jyothi Auditorium, Central College Campus, Bengaluru. The event brought together an incredible blend of performances, exhibitions, and experiences that left attendees in awe. In collaboration with Bengaluru City University, the festival provided a unique platform to showcase the rich diversity of Karnataka's culture. The two-day extravaganza offered everything from folk performances to literary discussions. The highlight of the event was its ability to cater to all age groups and interests, making it a truly family-friendly celebration. The inaugural session was attended by Union Minister V Somanna, leader of Opposition R Ashoka, Manipal Hospital chairman Dr Sudarshan Ballal, well-known actor Sri Murali, Bengaluru Central University vice-chancellor Dr Lingaraj Gandhi, VK and Bangalore Mirror CEO Deepak Saluja, VK editor Sudarshan Channangihalli, and others.

"Vijay Karnataka has truly brought the essence of Kannada culture to life. I was enthralled by the folk dances and music performances. It's not every day that you get to experience this much talent under one roof," said Nisha R, a Bengaluru resident. The Book Festival, which opened at 11.30 AM, drew crowds with a collection of works by celebrated authors like Vasudhendra. Literary discussions were held throughout the day, giving readers a chance to engage with the writers and gain deeper insights into Kannada literature. The Food Festival was another hit, with mouth-watering dishes from different regions of the state. Visitors were treated to authentic local flavors, with Voggarane Dabbi Murali inaugurating the festivities. "I was blown away by the variety of food on display. The flavours of North Karnataka took me back to my childhood. It was an absolute feast," shared Shwetha Naik, a food enthusiast.

In addition, Pradeep Eshwar, MLA from Chikkaballapura, addressed the students, inspiring the younger generation to embrace their roots while pursuing excellence.

Magic lovers were also treated to a mesmerising performance by Kudroli Ganesh. "I am so grateful to Vijay Karnataka for organising such an enriching event. This Kannada Habba is a testament to how vibrant and diverse our culture is. It's been a celebration like no other," said Rajesh Kumar, a college student.

With free entry and parking, the event was accessible to all, and the additional health checkup facilities, including blood tests, dental exams, and eye check-ups, made it even more special. Ananya S who took part in the programme said, "Kannada Habba is a perfect reflection of Karnataka's cultural richness. I've seen it all—from literature and art to food and fashion. This is celebration we need more of."

Visit VK Kannada Habba today

The event on the second day will begin at 9.30 AM with the inauguration of day two by Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar. From 10.00 to 11.00 AM, there will be a dance performance by students of BCU, followed by a session 'Nava Kannadigara Maathu Kathe' (The Stories of New Kannadigas), featuring State Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh, actresses Priyanka Upendra and Pooja Gandhi. Artist Badal Nanjundaswamy will present wall paintings and engage in an art workshop with children. The Kala Gangotri group will perform the play 'Chief Minister' at 12.30 PM, followed by a Mallakamba demonstration at 1.30 PM. A Yakshagana performance, 'Mahishasura Mardini,' will be held at 2.30 PM. At 5.30 PM, Vasu Dixit will hold a musical session, followed by Chandan Shetty's musical performance at 7.00 PM.

The venue is easily accessible via metro. Free entry and parking for all visitors.

—Prakash VL

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Delays and deceit: Clients left with unfinished homes

Multiple complaints surface against interior company for unfinished work, and financial losses, with victims pursuing legal action

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

An interior company that used to be well-known in the circuit now finds itself at the centre of controversy as numerous clients have accused the firm of broken promises, poor craftsmanship, and mounting delays.

A recent home buyer in SNN Cairnmount Apartment Complex filed a complaint against Wudzo Home Interiors, accusing the company's team of taking an advance of ₹6.92 lakh and an additional ₹30 lakh but failing to begin interior work. This is just one of the many complaints against the HSR-based company.

A WhatsApp group has been formed with over 40 members, who have shared their experiences and grievances, describing how they were allegedly deceived. Most of these victims are corporate employees, many of whom have moved to Bengaluru from other states.

A key complaint comes from Bhavneet, who had engaged Wudzo Interiors in April 2023 for a project with an agreed handover date set for December 2023. "I signed a contract with them in April 2023, and the promised handover was scheduled for December 2023. By September, they pressured us to make the full payment of Rs 27,53,444, claiming that modular quality assurance would be withheld otherwise and that our project could face additional delays," said Bhavneet.

> **"We went to the station, but no action was taken. Despite multiple complaints filed against Wudzo, the HSR police initially claimed they couldn't reach them. However, once the video went viral, the police began contacting victims, mentioning that Ashwin from Wudzo had raised concerns about the page**

Despite settling the payment, Bhavneet claims his home is still far from ready. "I'm yet to receive the proper handover. The work done so far is already starting to fall apart. The sink suddenly fell off after being used. Worse yet, they damaged my property, breaking a glass door during renovation, and despite a contract agreement, I haven't received any compensation. The total property damage will sum up to nearly Rs 9 to 10 lakh," Bhavneet said.

Bhavneet and several other victims had posted on the Instagram page named Namma Bengaluru about their experiences from 2021-2022 with Wudzo. "After we posted a video online about our experience, we received a message from the HSR Layout police station informing us that Wudzo had filed a complaint against us for sharing it. We went to the station, but no action was taken. Despite multiple complaints filed against Wudzo, the HSR police initially claimed they couldn't reach them. However, once the video went viral, the police began contacting victims, mentioning that Ashwin from Wudzo had raised concerns about the page." said Bhavneet.

Another victim said, "They also didn't give us the warranty cards etc. of the items fitted. They deposited around Rs 20,000 in our account for the delay. After much persuasion, they gave us a refund cheque for the pending work, but it bounced twice when presented for payment.

In 2022, we filed a criminal case against them in the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court. They are yet to appear for the hearings and the court has issued multiple non-bailable warrants but police have not been able to present them in court."

A couple shared their experience with Wudzo, starting with payments and designs coordinated by Sales Manager Jibin Thomas and Designer Vidisha Gupta. Despite over ₹27 lakh paid and a contract promising completion by June 2022, the project faced ongoing delays, incomplete materials, and ultimately, silence from Wudzo by November. Left unfinished, the couple had to hire another company to complete the work but continued to pay EMIs for Wudzo's incomplete job.

One victim shared the emotional and health toll of losing his lifetime savings to this scam, leaving him distressed and in need of medical help for stress. Another, who lost ₹80 lakh, suffered a heart attack upon realising the extent of the deception. BM contacted Wudzo, but they remained unresponsive to all the allegations.

Food safety raids ramp up

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The Food Safety Commissionerate, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is now evaluating the quality of food supplied from neighbouring states. In the last few days, it has focused on fried food items being brought into Karnataka from Kerala. In a series of surprise raids over the past two days, food items were checked at border check posts in Mysuru, Chamarajanagar, Kodagu, and Dakshina Kannada districts.

Srinivas K, Commissioner of Food Safety, Karnataka, said, "We collected 90 samples, including 'kara mixture', chips, 'halwa', 'murukku', rust, dry fruits, and sweets. Among them, 31 samples were found to be unsafe due to the presence of harmful substances. We will soon take legal action against the substandard production units."

He said that the unsafe food items were found to contain harmful artificial colourants like Carmoisine (synthetic red dye) and Tartrazine (yellow azo dye commonly used in food products).

Additionally, the presence of dangerous bacteria such as E coli and Coliform was detected, rendering these items unsafe for consumption.

"The analysis revealed the use of artificial colours like Alura Red and Sunset Yellow in 31 samples. Many of these food products lacked proper labelling. The Food Safety and Quality Department will continue to take necessary actions against violators," an official added.

Testing food samples across the state

In October the department launched special drives following media reports of illegal and artificial garlic being sold across Karnataka.

An official said, "154 garlic samples were tested, of which 147 were found safe, while 7 were unsafe due to fungus contamination. With the rise in sweet sales during the Deepavali festival, the department collected and analysed 151 samples of sweets. While 143 were deemed safe, nine samples contained artificial colours, making them unsafe for consumption."

Bengaluru Police clear the way: 150+ billboards seized

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Following an intensified crackdown on traffic violations, the East Division Traffic Police conducted a special operation on November 7 and 8 to address growing footpath encroachments issues. Over 150 billboards illegally placed on footpaths have been confiscated, and six cases have been registered.

Spanning busy locales such as Thippasandra Main Road, Indiranagar 80 Feet Road, MM Road, Mask Road, Coles Road, Kammanahalli Main Road, Infantry Road, Broadway Road, and KR Pura Railway Station Road, and ITPL Road.

The operation was an urgent response to persistent complaints of footpath encroachments. These thoroughfares, often plagued by illegally extended shopfronts and advertising billboards, have long posed a challenge to pedestrians navigating bustling commercial zones.

In areas like ITPL Road, Old Airport Road, and the Outer Ring Road, pedestrians frequently find themselves forced into busy streets, weaving around obstacles that hinder smooth movement.

The East Division Police confiscated over 150 illegal billboards and storefront extensions, removing the obstructions to provide a safer path for foot traffic. Kuldeep Kumar R Jain, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Traffic East Division, Bangalore, stated that the special drive is not part of the Indian Motor Vehicles (IMV) Act.

Instead, it focuses on pedestrian safety, ensuring clear footpaths and the removal of obstructions like billboards to allow uninterrupted pedestrian movement. This exercise is taken according to the needs of requirements and complaints of billboards.

He also confirmed that those who repeat they will be charged with petty cases. We remove these billboards and we give them to BBMP for destruction.

The traffic police officials have urged the imposition of legal action under Section 126 of the BNSS (Bangalore Municipal Corporation Act) against repeat offenders.

Section 126 of the 2023 Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) addresses wrongful restraint and preventive measures to maintain public peace. Wrongful restraint, or obstructing lawful movement, can result in up to one month of imprisonment, a fine of up to ₹5,000, or both.

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORYBEHINDTHEPHOTO

BUDGET DEEPAVALI

A homemade lamp designed by a five-year-old child, which is both aesthetic and goes easy on the pockets for Deepavali

The picture was clicked by reader **A Aruna**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

BBMP to fix Church Street cobblestones after public outcry

Due to heavy vehicle traffic on Church Street, once aesthetic lane is now falling apart

Sridhar Vivan
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TWEETS @sridharvMirror

Potholes, or rather cracks in the roads, seem to be a common sight across Bengaluru, whether on tar roads, white-topped roads, or even cobbled pavements. Church Street, a landmark of the city with its cobbled pavements, has now seen the cobblestones chipping away, making it difficult for pedestrians. In response to public outcry, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike has decided to address the issue and carry out repairs this Saturday.

"It's very disappointing to see something that was supposed to add to the aesthetic of the area falling apart so quickly. I walk along Church Street every day, and it's clear the quality of these cobblestones isn't up to standards. They look great when new, but they've started deteriorating way too fast," said Vilasini Singh, a college student. Business owners along Church Street are also upset, as many have noticed the deterioration of the paving, particularly near the entrances to their stores, where customers are at risk of tripping. "We invested a lot of time and money into promoting Church Street as a pedestrian-friendly area, but now we have people complaining about the uneven surfaces," said Neha Singh, an entrepreneur.

KAUSHIK JN

Cobblestone repair work at Church Street on Saturday

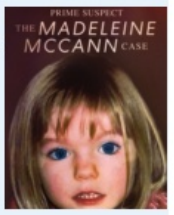
Locals allege that the issue stems from heavy vehicles servicing hotels in the area, which frequently use the street. Church Street was originally laid in 2018 as part of the TenderSURE project with a two-year guarantee, at a cost of Rs 18 crore. In addition, the stretch was renovated with cobblestones at a cost of Rs 9 crore. With a one-way vehicle passage in place, experts are now questioning the purpose of the cobblestones and the high maintenance costs associated with them. This year alone, the cobblestones on Church Street have come undone twice, causing inconvenience to both motorists and pedestrians.

> **"The passage of heavy vehicles like tankers has caused the cobblestones on Church Street to break**
>
> – BBMP official

An urbanist said that cobblestones, as used in European concepts, are built to withstand snow and serve primarily for optics. They work well on pedestrian-only streets. But Church Street is largely a commercial area with an inevitable demand for heavy vehicle passage. However, BBMP officials stated that they do not intend to relay the stretch with asphalt or white-topping but will take steps to protect the area. "Church Street with cobblestones was intended for both vehicles and pedestrians, but the passage of heavy vehicles like tankers has caused the cobblestones to break. Cobblestones can withstand the weight of motor vehicles up to the size of cars. To address this, we will install high barriers and instruct traffic police to restrict heavy vehicle entry," said a BBMP official, adding that hotels bringing heavy vehicles for unloading are loosening the joints. Additionally, cobblestones are stronger than asphalt.

DID YOU KNOW?

One of the most well-known missing person cases in contemporary history is the May 3, 2007, disappearance of British toddler Madeleine McCann from her family's vacation rental in Praia da Luz, Portugal. Madeleine McCann, age three, was on vacation with her twin siblings, ages two and two, and her parents, Kate and Gerry McCann. The family was lodging at the Ocean Club resort in Praia da Luz. While dining with friends at a local restaurant on the evening of May 3, 2007, the McCanns left their kids sleeping in their apartment. Kate McCann found Madeleine gone when she went to check on the kids at around ten o'clock at night. A significant investigation was started by Portuguese authorities, but it was fraught with difficulties and disputes. The McCanns were subjected to a great deal of scrutiny and were at one pint named as suspects in the case. Many hypotheses have been put up regarding the case; however none of them have been confirmed beyond a reasonable doubt. Christian B was identified as the case's main suspect by German investigators in 2020. When Madeleine vanished, Christian, a convicted sexual offender, was residing in Portugal. Despite the lack of hard proof, German prosecutors think Madeleine is dead. Madeleine McCann's investigation is still ongoing.



GET HEARD WITH MIRROR

9591233247

Let's see how much you know about Namma Bengaluru, folks. Tell us something incredible and mind-boggling about this beautiful city and our editors and researchers will check it out. If it's credible, we'll give it a shout-out, with your name and picture.

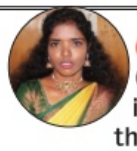
TAPTHECHATTER

where Bengalureans speak their mind

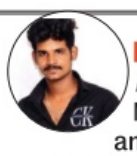
Can you recommend a unique food that captures the essence of Bengaluru for you?

Narasimha Murthy, BM Reader
The iconic masala dosa is a must-try dish in Bengaluru. This staple food item is a symbol of the city's rich culinary culture. Fermented batter and spicy potato mixture, the masala dosa is not just a meal but an experience.

Pavan Kumar R, BM Reader
The food that I recommend the most would be ragi ball. Since I'm from north India, it was new to me. It's texture and taste, with a curry, salad, and side dish, take it to the next level, and I would prefer it most with the chicken curry.

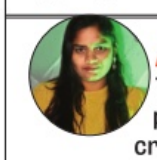


Gayathri M, BM Reader
One of the most famous foods here is rava idli. It is a unique twist on the traditional idli, made with semolina instead of rice flour. Another delicacy is rice and sambar, without which the day is incomplete for me and my fellow Bengalureans.



Puttaraju K, BM Reader
A local delicacy of the Udupi region, Mangalore Buns are sweet, tender, and fluffy puris made of bananas. They are easy to make and are generally relished with coconut chutney and sambhar.

Keshava Kumar R, BM Reader
Obbattu is a local dish of the Mysore region and is a popular street food in Bengaluru. Locally called bobbatlu or puran poli, Dal Obbattu is made of toor dal, jaggery, cardamom powder, flour, and rava. Obbattu is served piping hot with ghee sprinkled on it



Akshata B, BM Reader
The South Indian breakfast—piping hot idlis, soft vadas, and crispy dosas—is undoubtedly a classic in Bengaluru. It may look regular and simple, but these dishes are not only delicious but also nutritious.

SPEAK TO US

What advice would you give to newcomers to Bengaluru to help them integrate into the city's vibrant community?

If you want to be featured in this section, mail us your answer to this question, in 25 words, with 'Tap The Chatter' in the subject line. Mail us with your name, occupation & a picture at WhatsApp us on 9591233247 or mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com

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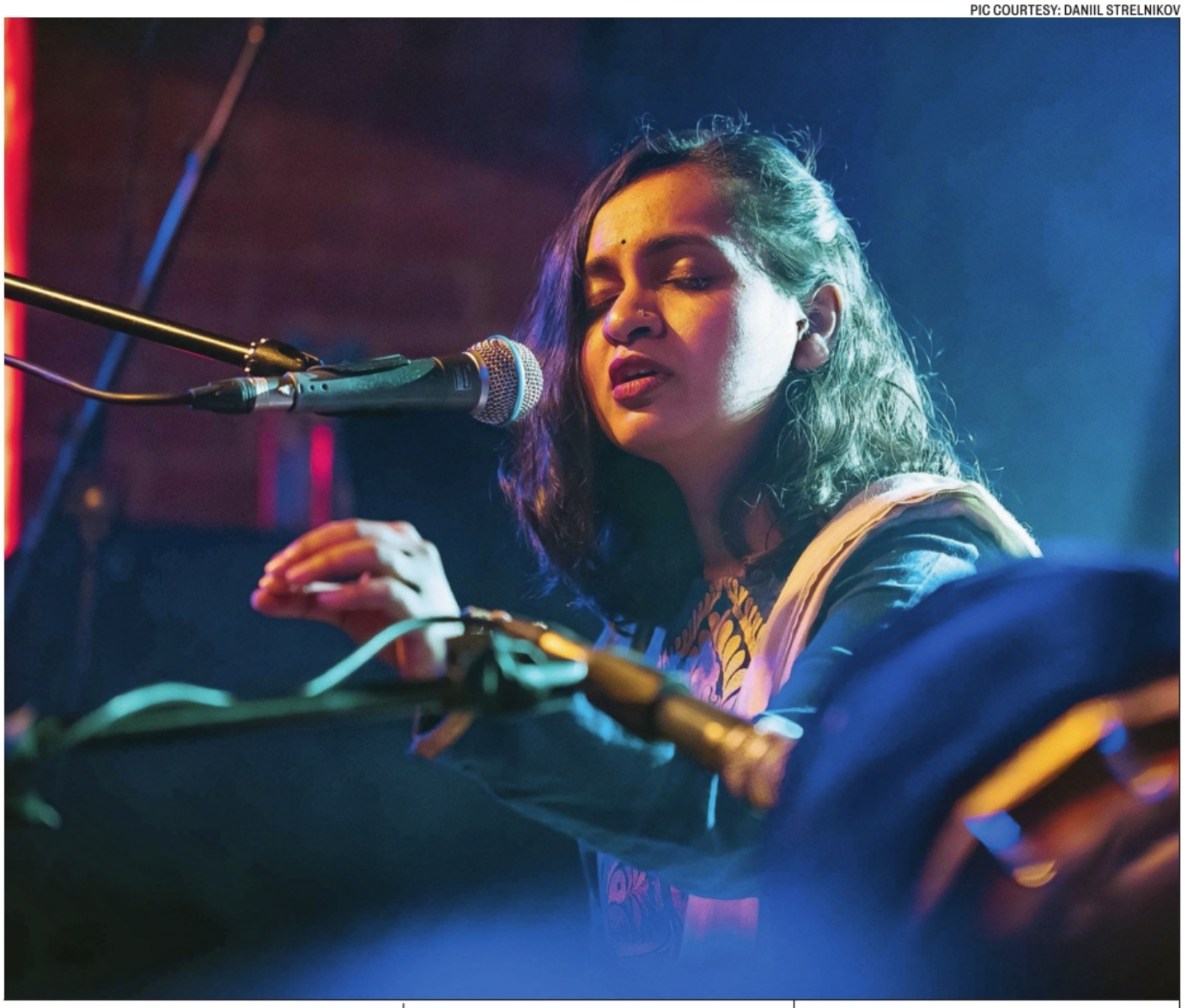

Soul song

Varijashree's Vari merges water's essence with Kannada's soul

R Prashanth Vidyasagar
mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

Released earlier in May, Vari has left a profound impact, establishing itself as one of the most brilliant alternative Kannada albums in recent years. At the heart of this immersive work is Varijashree Venugopal—a visionary artist whose creative spirit and cultural pride resonate deeply within each track. As we delve into this musical journey, we explore how Varijashree's unique blend of sounds continues to captivate listeners and leave a lasting impression.

The world of fusion music has a new, resonant voice: Varijashree Venugopal. Recognised as a child prodigy in Indian classical music, Varijashree's journey from identifying ragas at 18 months to performing around the world has been nothing short of remarkable. Her latest album, Vari, a ground breaking fusion project, showcases her deep connection to Carnatic music while extending beyond cultural and linguistic boundaries. On Saturday, Varijashree added another feather to her cap. The Bengaluru-based artist features in the song A Rock Somewhere by Anoushka Shankar in collaboration with British musician Jacob Collier that earned a Grammy nomination in the Best Global Music Performance category.

Vari which means "water" is both a play on her name and a reflection of her music's fluid, soothing essence. This soundscape is one of the most beautiful albums of recent times, embracing listeners with the same comfort as a warm beverage on a cold, rainy day. With each song, Varijashree captures the essence of flow and calm, drawing the listener into a state of ease. The music isn't just a collection of tracks; it envelops you, creating a warmth that feels tangible.

Each piece in Vari takes listeners on a soundscape journey—especially songs like 'Nee' and 'Hariva Jari', which roll gently through a range of emotions. 'Kannada', a heartfelt homage to the beautiful language, subtly conveys the warmth and complexity of what it feels like to think, feel, and dream in Kannada. It's a tribute that captures the unique sentiment a Kannadiga experiences, gracefully illustrating how language can evoke emotion without embellishment.

Growing up in a musical household where her father, HS Venugopal, is a renowned flautist, and her mother, Rama Venugopal, a singer, Varijashree's first language was music. As a child, she absorbed music everywhere—at home, at concerts, and from cassettes playing in the background. Her father's approach to teaching was playful rather than rigid, often using games to help her identify ragas. This indirect conditioning worked wonders: by the time she was just 18 months old, she could recognize nearly 40 ragas.

Through Vari, Varijashree skillfully blends her Carnatic base with her passion for jazz, global music, and the improvisational styles she's discovered through artists like John McLaughlin, John Coltrane, and Bobby McFerrin. This fusion is at the heart of her signature 'Carnatic Scat Singing', an inventive combination of jazz scat with Indian solfege, which has captivated international audiences. Her collaborations with world-renowned musicians, including Grammy-winning Michael League of Snarky Puppy and jazz icon Bobby McFerrin, are a testament to her effortless blending of Indian classical and Western improvisational styles.

Through Vari, Varijashree blends her Carnatic base with her passion for jazz, global music, and the improvisational styles she's discovered through artists like John McLaughlin, John Coltrane, and Bobby McFerrin. This fusion is at the heart of her signature 'Carnatic Scat Singing'

If we take a closer look at the music videos Varijashree has worked on, it becomes clear that her creative vision extends well beyond sound; each video is a carefully crafted extension of her music, adding visual depth that heightens the emotional journey of her tracks. The music video for Hariva Jari reveals Varijashree's skill as a visual thinker, seamlessly blending sound and imagery into a captivating experience that feels loop-worthy and immersive. In Dream, she creates a surreal, colorful journey reminiscent of a psychedelic trip—a nod to the freewheeling spirit of Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas—with each visual as vibrant and boundless as the dream itself. Her video for Ranjani follows this imaginative thread but dives even deeper, visually mirroring the complex layering that defines the track, making each image a perfect complement to the intricate soundscape.

More than a performer, Varijashree is also a passionate educator. Her masterclasses reveal the fundamentals of Carnatic music in a way that's accessible to international audiences. She encourages her students to find their voice in today's fast-paced, content-driven world, advocating for music as a universal language.

In her recent tour of Vari, which included a performance at Jazz al Parque in Bogotá, Colombia, Varijashree's Kannada soundscapes resonated deeply with international listeners. She's received acclaim for her ability to make Indian classical music universally appealing, while Vari remains proudly rooted in Kannada. For Varijashree, language is secondary to emotion; her music speaks on a fundamental, heartfelt level, celebrating Kannada as an inseparable part of her artistry.

With her international collaborations, award-winning contributions to music, and Vari, Varijashree Venugopal redefines how Kannada and Indian classical music can flow into contemporary global contexts. Each song in Vari feels like a journey, inviting listeners to experience the warmth of Kannada on a soul-deep level.

A passionate educator, Varijashree's classes reveal the fundamentals of Carnatic music that make it accessible to global audiences

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Of 280 transplanted trees, 250+ have dried up

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

As per K-RIDE's quarterly report (March to May 2024), the success rate of trees transplanted between February and June 2023 by Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is a little over 62%. While 61 trees were uprooted and transplanted in various areas across the city, as many as 38 are now showing signs of survival.

BMRCL follows the root ball method as recommended through a set of guidelines proposed by a team of botanists from the University of Agricultural Sciences, GKVK.

However, experts say, that for a higher success rate, the procedures recommended in the guidelines have to be precisely followed.

The guidelines by GKVK include procedures for digging and root pruning, trimming and treatment of the roots after exposure, creation of root balls of reasonable size, and scientific preparation of the new site.

"The creation of root balls with precision and care is an important step. However, the new location also plays a vital role in the survival of transplanted trees. Those transplanted near lakes and tanks with better soil conditions have a higher chance of survival. In 2021, we translocated hundreds of trees near Chikka Madhure temple in Doddaballapur and the majority of them have survived," said Dr C Nagarajaiah, professor and ex-head of the Department of Forestry and Environmental Science at the University Of Agricultural Sciences (GKVK), Bengaluru.

Success stories?

BMRCL's report also includes some translocations done between December 2022 and March 2023 that showcase a much higher survival rate of over 72%. In the given period, while 984 trees were uprooted and planted elsewhere, 710 are showing signs of survival.

Experts say the high survival rate in trees translocated between December and March may be due to the favorable season.

"In the majority of tree species, Auxin concentration level is high during winter months. Auxin contributes to cell differentiation and promotes root and shoot development, along with fruit growth. Generally speaking, the hormone leads to better growth in trees," added Nagarajaiah.

State govt targets Rs 1.96 lakh cr revenue

The State Government has set a target to collect ₹1.96 lakh crore in the current fiscal year through its own tax and non-tax revenue sources, achieving 53% of its revenue collection goal within the first seven months. However, growing committed expenditure obligations and debt servicing requirements are causing concern, as costs continue to rise year-on-year.

Sources said that there has been an increase of ₹31,362 crore in spending on government employee salaries, pensions, and interest payments on government loans. The government is set to allocate a substantial ₹1.52 lakh crore towards committed expenses this year, with the state's total debt expected to reach ₹6.57 lakh crore by the fiscal year-end.

Despite the state's financial situation, funding committed expenses such as salaries, pensions, and debt interest payments remains essential. These payments are prioritised and considered non-negotiable expenses in the budget.

Increased expenditure: An official said, "This year, the combined expenses for salaries, pensions, and other commitments are expected to total ₹1,53,023 crore, representing an increase of ₹22,670 crore compared to the previous fiscal year. The implementation of the 7th Pay Commission recommendations for state employees has contributed to this rise in costs." **BMB**

Traffic, pollution, tough targets stress out BMTC workers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

exposure to CPR until dedicated medical help arrives. Trained bystanders can provide immediate care, doubling or tripling survival chances. Wide dissemination of training can save countless lives," said Dr Rajpal Singh, Fortis Hospital, Bannerghatta Road.

He said that CPR maintains blood circulation, delivering oxygen to vital organs while AEDs restore heart rhythm by delivering electrical shocks. These interventions buy time until medical help arrives, significantly improving survival rates and reducing brain damage.

"CPR involves chest compressions (100/min) and rescue breaths (30:2 ratio). This maintains blood flow, supplying oxygen. AEDs analyse heart rhythm, detecting abnormal patterns. If necessary, they deliver electrical shocks to restore normal rhythm. This synchronised process helps revive the heart, ensuring blood circulation," he explained.

"It's important to be aware that high-traffic locations like airports, train stations, shopping malls and offices see large numbers of people every day, increasing the likelihood that someone might suffer a cardiac emergency. When an AED is available and quickly used, it can restore a normal heart rhythm and significantly increase the chance of survival before professional help arrives. In a country with a high incidence of cardiac events, installing AEDs in accessible areas empowers bystanders to act promptly and potentially save lives," said Dr Jai Babu, Senior Consultant- Interventional Cardiologist, Altius Hospital.

BMTC workers under stress

BMTC drivers face significant health risks, says a study from 2023 showing 40-50 percent of them experiencing diabetes, hypertension and high blood pressure, putting them at risk of cardiovascular complications.

According to Dr CN Manjunath, Director of Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research, the institute conducted health screenings for 8,200 BMTC drivers since August 2022, following an MoU between the hospital and BMTC.

The comprehensive health assessment included blood tests, cardiac stress tests, ECG and echocardiograms. Results revealed concerning statistics – 40 per cent had diabetes, 40 per cent experienced hypertension, and 62 per cent showed high blood pressure. Additionally, 5 percent of drivers were discovered to have existing heart blockages, while 35 per cent were regular smokers.

Dr Manjunath had attributed these cardiovascular health issues among drivers to their irregular working schedules, inadequate nutrition, sedentary nature of work, and exhaustion from extended periods of driving. One of the factors was also their consistent exposure to air pollution as inhalation of particulate matter less than 2.5 mg can easily pass through lungs and create blockage in the arteries.

"Chronic work stress increases heart attack risk by 40-50%. Prolonged stress elevates blood pressure, cortisol levels, and cardiovascular strain. This accelerates plaque buildup, blood vessel constriction, and cardiac arrhythmias. Managing work stress through relaxation techniques, exercise, and time management is essential for maintaining cardiovascular health," said Dr Singh.

"There are many issues that are plaguing the healthy work environment of road transport workers. Our wages have not been increased adequately but our bus routes and daily targets have been increased with the rise in population of the city. In Bengaluru's staggering traffic, it is impossible to achieve these goals without feeling immense stress. The corporation has also been taking steps towards privatisation by introducing contract drivers, causing anxiety among many of us," a worker from the road transport corporation union said.

Vinay Sreenivasa from the Bengaluru Bus Prayanikara Vedike (BBPV) urged the transport minister Ramalinga Reddy to constitute a committee including members from unions, transport and health departments, in order to address the issue of extreme stress on drivers and conductors.

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personal

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I, MEHBOOB SHARIEF, Residing at No 199, 7th Main Road, Jayanagar 2nd Block, Bangalore -560011, Have changed my name to HUSSAIN MAHABOOB SHARIEFF, vide affidavit dated 08/11/2024 sworn before Notary Aravind Patil G.G Bangalore

I, Mohammed Riyaz Pasha S/o Mohammed Hussain R/o 19/6 5th Cross Chelvadi palya Dr TCM Royal Rd B'lore-560053 have changed my name to Riyaz Pasha .

MISSING

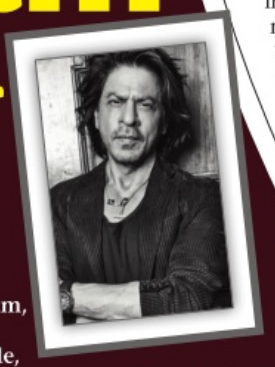
MISSING

Satyanarayana Age 60, Missing from Banashankari, Bangalore, Mentally retarded. Suitable reward is considered.
Wearing Purple Shirt and Grey Jeans
Contact: 9986450482

 # Proud sis Actress Huma Qureshi, who was recently seen in the biopic 'Tarla', has her heart full with the kind of response her brother, actor Saqib Saleem is getting for his work in 'Citadel: Honey Bunny'

That was just a dream

Turns out SRK did not actually pay for Sayani's shoes



Sayani Gupta is currently making headlines for her latest film, 'Khwaabon Ka Jhamela', directed by Danish Aslam, which premiered on JioCinema. Meanwhile, a video has been circulating online featuring Sayani sharing a story about accidentally ruining a pair of designer shoes worth Rs 3.5 lakh and how Shah Rukh Khan came to her rescue.

But, there's a twist, Sayani revealed that the scenario was just a dream and didn't actually happen! In a video posted by Filmygyan on Instagram, Sayani recounted a moment when she damaged a pair of designer shoes. She explained that there were two pairs, both made of paper, and her friends encouraged her to try them on.

Following their suggestion, she put on one of the shoes but found herself unable to stand properly. Sayani described how she had to brace herself against a wall for support, as the paper construction couldn't bear her weight. As soon as she tried to walk, the shoe gave way and broke. Sayani went on to say that she was asked to cover the cost of the shoes, which left her extremely stressed, as she couldn't afford the Rs 3.5 lakh price tag.

The 'Jab Harry Met Sejal' actress then shared that the following day, she was informed that Shah Rukh Khan had paid for the shoes. Confused, she asked for clarification and was told that he had purchased many items and this was just a minor expense for him. However, it turns out that Sayani was actually recounting a recent dream, not a real-life event, as revealed in the full interview.

— ETimes

High net worth couple

Suriya and Jyothika are undoubtedly a power couple, both on and off the screen, setting the bar high for relationship goals. Their natural chemistry in films has charmed audiences, while their real-life love story continues to inspire fans. Through their warmth and unwavering support for each other, they've created a beautiful example of lasting love in the industry, making them one of the most admired couples in Indian cinema.

The Kollywood icons are celebrated not only for their acting careers but also for their strong partnership. Together, they've built a beautiful family, thriving careers, and a luxurious lifestyle, making them one of the wealthiest couples in the industry. Their love story, alongside their impressive net worth, continues to captivate fans who admire their journey from co-stars to an inspiring power couple. Jyothika is a versatile actress, known for her roles in Tamil, Malayalam, and Hindi films. She is reputed to earn around Rs 5 crore per film, reflecting her strong presence in the South Indian film industry and her ability to connect with a wide range of audiences across various languages.

Suriya is reportedly charging Rs 30 crore for his upcoming film Kanguva. His salary is expected to increase postrelease, regardless of the film's box office performance. This reflects his growing stature and demand in the industry.

Due to their successful careers, businesses, and assets, Suriya and Jyothika have accumulated a considerable net worth. Interestingly, reports suggest that Jyothika's net worth surpasses Suriya's, making her the higher-earning partner in the power couple.

Reports indicate that Suriya's net worth is estimated at Rs 206 crore, while Jyothika's stands at Rs 331 crore. Together, their combined net worth amounts to Rs 530 crore, making them the wealthiest couple in Kollywood.

—ETimes

Movie night with dad

Ananya Panday has all her Saturday night plans set, and it involves celebrating her father Chunky Panday's latest work! The young star shared her excitement on social media, revealing her plan to catch the recently released 'Vijay 69.' Posting the movie poster on her Instagram stories, Ananya added the caption, "My movie night plan is sorted!," along with the hashtag #Vijay69 and a starry-eyed emoji."

In 'Vijay 69', Anupam Kher essays a determined 69-year-old with a mission-to prove that age is no barrier by competing in a triathlon. Every possible obstacle awaits his character, an inspiring yet stubborn "angry old man," from the kind of coach he needs to his family's support. On his way is his friend, played by Chunky Panday, who initially has doubts but eventually becomes the unlikely ally in that endgame. Directed and written by Akshay Roy and produced by Maneesh Sharma, this one beautifully brings into the frame resilience, amicability, and the undying spirit to pursue your dreams irrespective of your age.

Ananya is high on action as far as her career is concerned. In the recent past, the actress was seen in Vikramaditya Motwane's 'CTRL' with Vihaan Samat. Next on the cards for her would be the C Sankaran Nair biopic along with Akshay Kumar and R Madhavan. She will also be seen in 'Chand Mera Dil', a romantic film, with the maker of 'Kill' Lakshya, when they share screen space.

—ETimes

Zendaya, Anne Hathaway join Nolan's next film

After causing a massive explosion of epic proportions on the celluloid with his biopic 'Oppenheimer', acclaimed filmmaker Christopher Nolan is making another film.

Hollywood stars Zendaya and Anne Hathaway have joined Christopher Nolan's next film at Universal, alongside previously announced cast members Tom Holland and Matt Damon, reports 'Variety'.

Nolan is writing and directing the movie, which is set for a theatrical and Imax release on July 17, 2026. Plot details are currently under wraps. Universal had no comment on the casting.

As per 'Variety', it's a reunion for Hathaway and Nolan, who previously collaborated on the 2014 space epic 'Interstellar' and the third part of his 'Batman' trilogy, 'The Dark Knight Rises'. Earlier this year, Hathaway expressed gratitude for Nolan, who cast her in 'Interstellar' amidst a wave of online hate following her Oscar win for 'Les Misérables'.

"A lot of people wouldn't give me roles because they were so concerned about how toxic my identity had become online", Hathaway told Vanity Fair. "I had an angel in Christopher Nolan, who did not care about that and gave me one of the most beautiful roles I've had in one of the best films that I've been a part of … And my career did not lose momentum the way it could have if he hadn't backed me".

Anne Hathaway has a slate of films, including James Gray's 'Paper Tiger' with Adam Driver and Jeremy Strong, 'Flowervale Street' from director David Robert Mitchell, 'Mother Mary' opposite Michaela Coel and Disney's long-awaited 'Princess Diaries 3'. Zendaya appeared in two of the year's biggest hits, 'Challengers' and 'Dune: Part Two', and will be seen with Robert Pattinson in 'The Drama'. She and lover Tom Holland have previously worked on the 'Spider-Man' films.

— IANS

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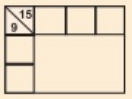
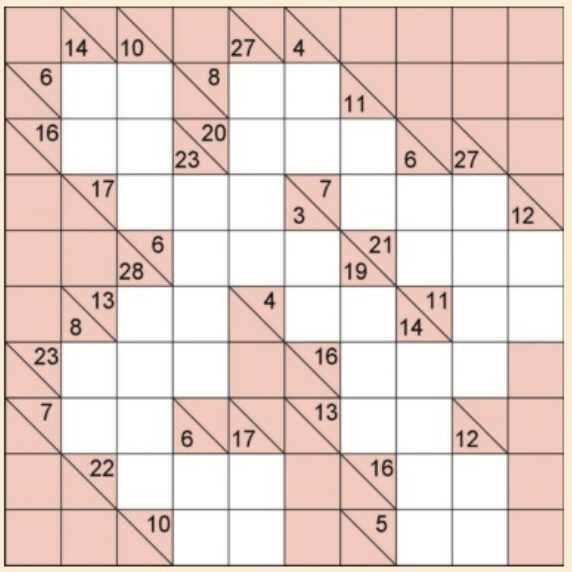
Kakuro

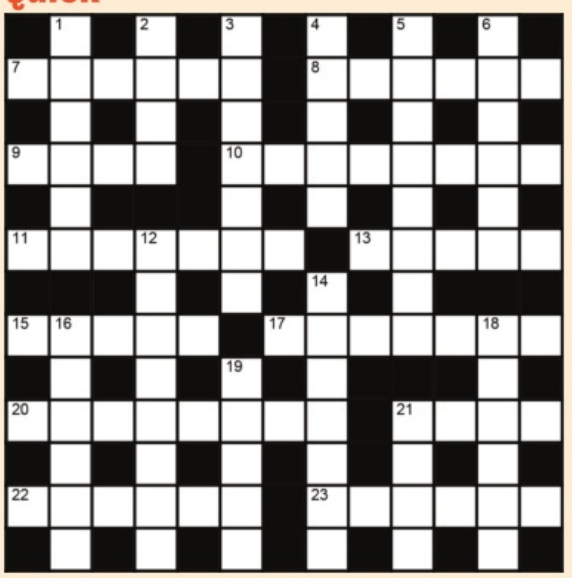
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Old World monkey (6)
8 Exhaust the limit of (3,3)
9 Audible return (4)
10 Squealed or complained about (6,2)
11 Alcoholic drink (4-3)
13 Writer of lyric poetry (5)
15 Corrosive chemicals? (5)
17 Newsman ___ Sardesai (7)
20 Theme park located on the Place Grounds (3,5)
21 Snoozes (4)
22 Put on clothing, hat, etc. (6)
23 Name of eight English kings? (6)

DOWN

1 French mathematician (6)
2 One as a prefix; not a stereo (4)
3 Inactivity (7)
4 Vacant (5)
5 Went beyond, crossed the limit? (8)
6 Decision-makers in court (6)
12 Giving as a grant or charity or loan (8)
14 Propels a canoe or rows gently (7)
16 Daniel Defoe's Robinson ___ (6)
18 Large kingdom (6)
19 Destroy gradually (5)
21 Tidings (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: Q EQUALS G

O JGTU ZGLURI RUAUG QUJD LR WYTG MOW TRXUDD WYT VOSSUR JY EU QYLRQ IYMR.

Linemaro

Are you a 90 degree angle? You are looking right

Mindchow

The opposite of failing is not succeeding; the opposite of failing is trying

Joke of the day

Church bulletin: The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the Congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday

Loop

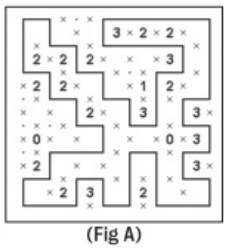
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

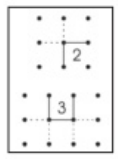
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

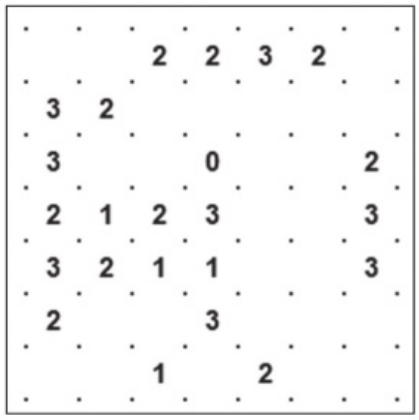
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



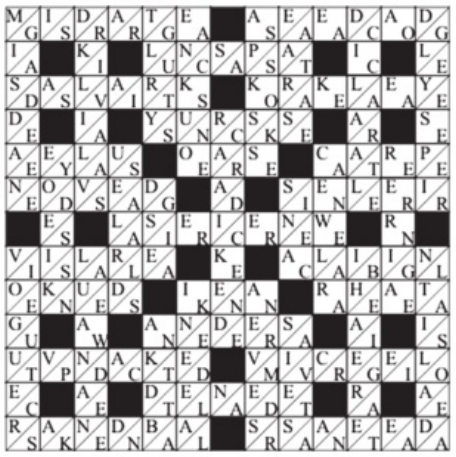
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



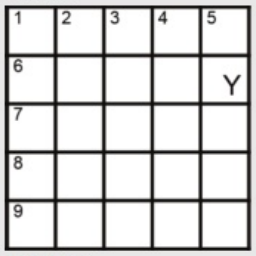
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 Palls; 6 Ray RA; 7 Horse; 8 Al Gem; 9 Lobes

DOWN

1 I bash; 2 Or mop; 3 A rale; 4 Elgar; 5 SS Lye

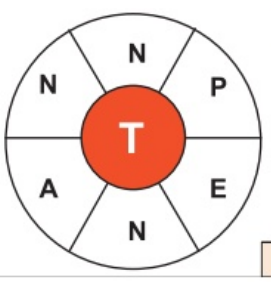
Mensapuzzle

Below are four squeezer puzzles. Can you find the correct word to be placed in the middle of each to create two new words, one front-end and one back-end?

Here's an example of how it works:
ever **GREEN** horn

step _____ proof
fire _____ boat
star _____ walk
stock _____ master

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

04 Average; **05** Good; **07** Outstanding

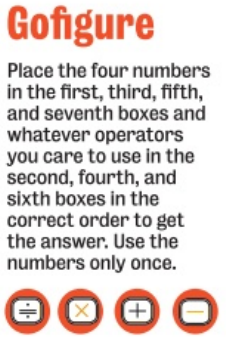
SudokuChallenge

	7	2	6		4	8	5	
		6	1		5	7		
5								2
3				1				5
			9		8			
6				4				7
4								6
		3	2		1	4		
	8	5	4		7	3	9	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

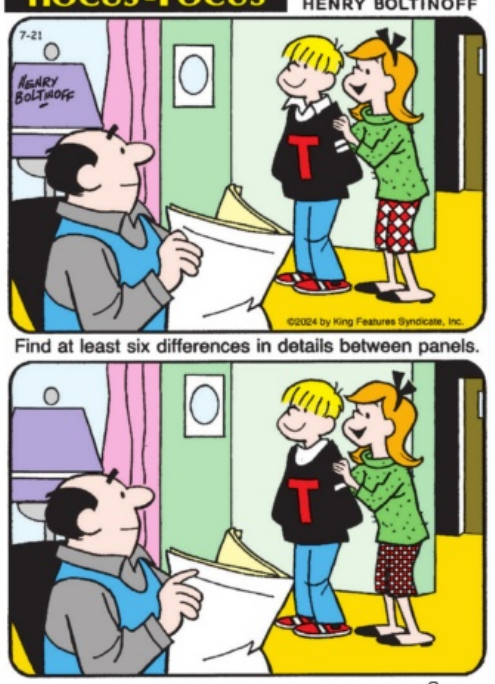
Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

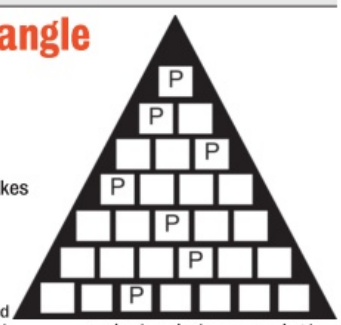
Differences: 1. Stripe is missing from sleeve. 2. Pants have a different pattern. 3. Finger is moved. 4. Boy's collar is missing. 5. Bow is moved. 6. Picture is moved.

Riddler

It was Louis Ixolite's bedtime and as usual he wanted a bedtime story. He was a bright young man and had managed to communicate in Rebuses before he could speak. Daddy asked Louis which story he would like to hear and Louis scribbled down the following Rebus in crayon. Soybeans "blah blah blah" Jack "blah blah blah" Kidneybeans "blah blah blah" What story did Louis want to hear?

Alpha triangle

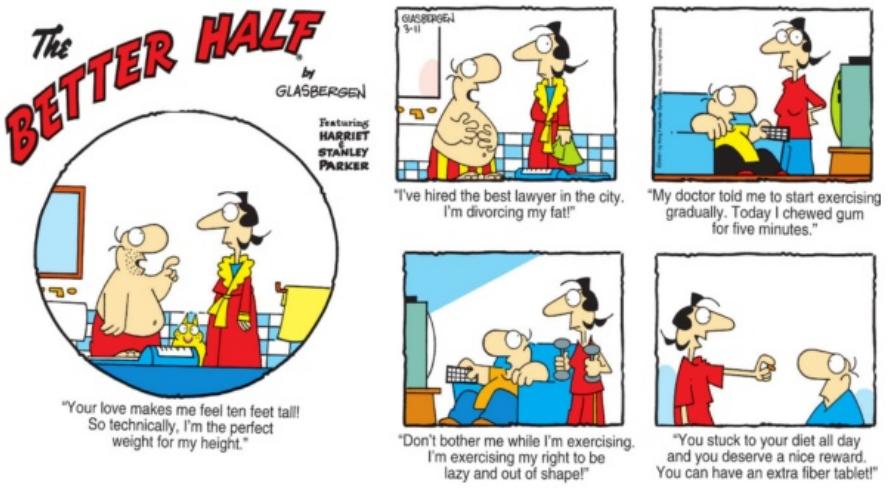
1 Pumpkin head
2 Dad
3 Course circuit
4 Washed out
5 Hiatus
6 Taste
7 Transfixes on stakes

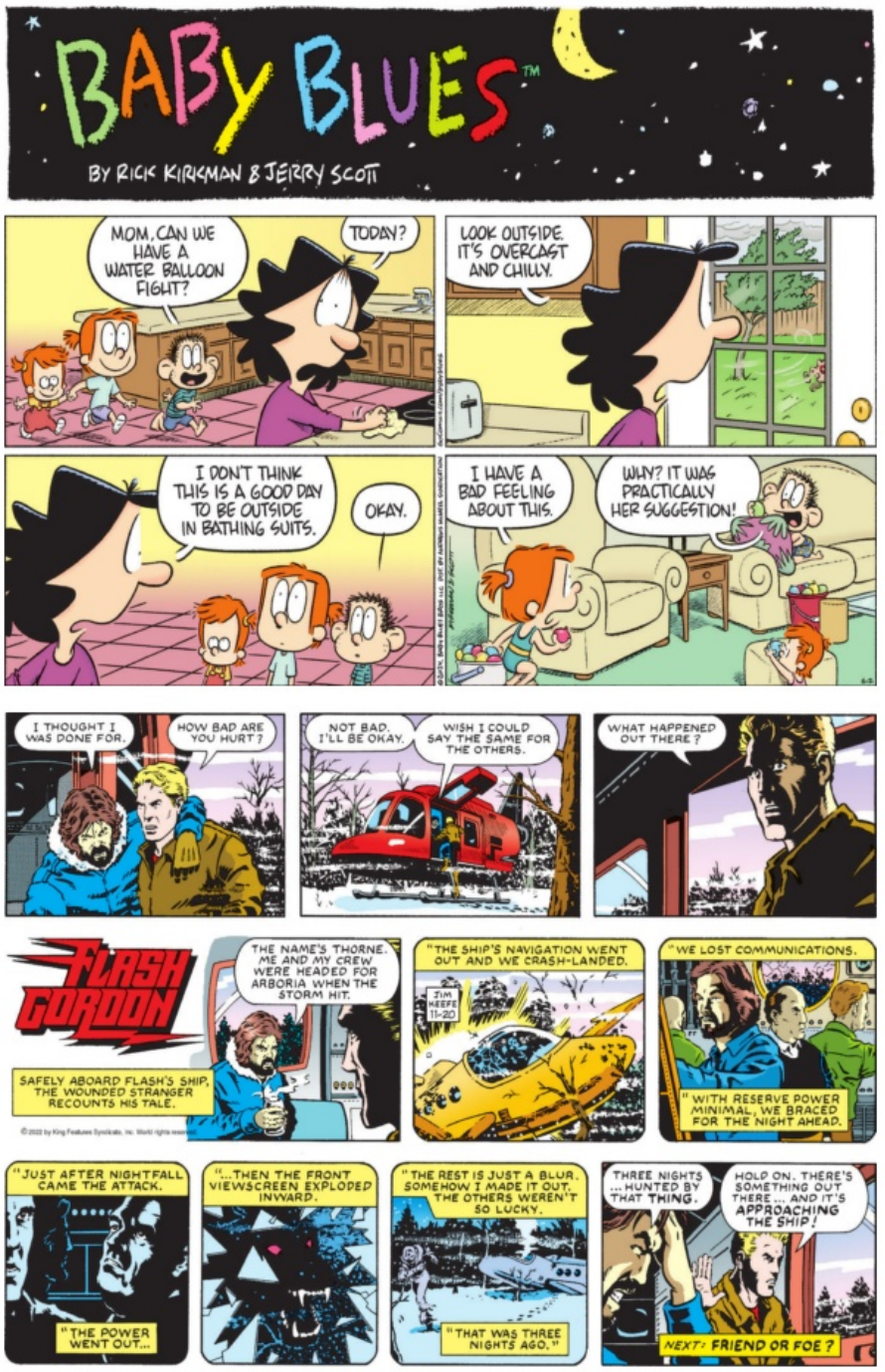


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS


The BETTER HALF
by GLASBERGEN
Featuring HARRIET & STANLEY PARKER
"Your love makes me feel ten feet tall! So technically, I'm the perfect weight for my height."
"I've hired the best lawyer in the city. I'm divorcing my fat!"
"My doctor told me to start exercising gradually. Today I chewed gum for five minutes."
"Don't bother me while I'm exercising. I'm exercising my right to be lazy and out of shape!"
"You stuck to your diet all day and you deserve a nice reward. You can have an extra fiber tablet!"


BABY BLUES
BY RICK KIRKMAN & JERRY SCOTT
MOM, CAN WE HAVE A WATER BALLOON FIGHT?
TODAY?
LOOK OUTSIDE. IT'S OVERCAST AND CHILLY.
I DON'T THINK THIS IS A GOOD DAY TO BE OUTSIDE IN BATHING SUITS.
OKAY.
I HAVE A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.
WHY? IT WAS PRACTICALLY HER SUGGESTION!

I THOUGHT I WAS DONE FOR.
HOW BAD ARE YOU HURT?
NOT BAD. I'LL BE OKAY.
WISH I COULD SAY THE SAME FOR THE OTHERS.
WHAT HAPPENED OUT THERE?
FLASH GORDON
THE NAME'S THORNE. ME AND MY CREW WERE HEADED FOR ARBORIA WHEN THE STORM HIT.
SAFELY ABOARD FLASH'S SHIP, THE WOUNDED STRANGER RECOUNTS HIS TALE.
"THE SHIP'S NAVIGATION WENT OUT AND WE CRASH-LANDED.
JIM KEEFE 11-20
"WE LOST COMMUNICATIONS.
"WITH RESERVE POWER MINIMAL, WE BRACED FOR THE NIGHT AHEAD.
"JUST AFTER NIGHTFALL CAME THE ATTACK.
"THE POWER WENT OUT...
"...THEN THE FRONT VIEWSCREEN EXPLODED INWARD.
"THE REST IS JUST A BLUR. SOMEHOW I MADE IT OUT. THE OTHERS WEREN'T SO LUCKY.
"THAT WAS THREE NIGHTS AGO."
THREE NIGHTS ... HUNTED BY THAT THING.
HOLD ON. THERE'S SOMETHING OUT THERE ... AND IT'S APPROACHING THE SHIP!
NEXT: FRIEND OR FOE?

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you are blessed by an auspicious moon, which may bring happiness and chronic health issues are likely to be resolved. It's a good time to start postponed projects. Luck may be on your side for gains in business, and your hard work might be rewarded. You may also experience peaceful travel, both for religious and work-related reasons.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today, the moon's influence may leave you feeling dull, and health issues could arise. Losses are possible during this period, so avoid investing in risky assets. Gains may become losses, so refrain from spending on worthless objects and avoid getting involved in controversies, as this could impact you negatively.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today, you are blessed by the moon, which is bringing love into the air in your personal life. Singles may find a suitable match. Professionally, you may do well, and friends and subordinate staff are likely to support you

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, you may feel confident, which will be reflected in your work. You may find yourself in a winning position against opponents and enemies, with a strong focus on your goals. Health issues may improve. However, try to avoid unnecessary arguments in domestic life to maintain harmony.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Due to auspicious planetary combinations, you may feel happy and energised, boosting your prestige among those around you. You may spend time studying intellectual topics and planning for higher studies.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, you might feel a bit dull, which could affect your work. However, with the blessings of elders, you're likely to regain your momentum. Extra attention may be needed for children's health. You'll be in a strong position against enemies and opponents, but investors should exercise caution when making tough decisions. Stomach issues might cause some discomfort.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, you may feel happy at work and make important decisions by day's end that will benefit you in the future. A short trip may be on the cards. Your subordinates are likely to cooperate, and you might receive good news regarding a sibling's success. Legal matters could also work in your favour. Students may be more focused on achieving their goals.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today, your communication skills may benefit your professional life. Being more polite with those around you could help accelerate your projects. Lovebirds may share their thoughts, laying the foundation for their relationship.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, you are blessed by the moon. A new partnership may bring benefits, and your energy levels are likely to be high. Hard work and enthusiasm may result in financial gains, while self-respect may shield you from negative influences.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, you may feel a bit down or unhappy. Avoid harsh conversations with friends and family, as responses to your efforts may feel lacking. Trust your intuition and be patient when making important decisions.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today, new sources of income might open up, and past investments could yield good profits, boosting your bank balance. You may connect with a social organisation, expanding your network. Singles might meet a soulmate with marriage potential.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today, blessings from elders may boost your confidence. Trusting your intuition before taking initiative at work may be beneficial, potentially leading to financial gains. You might visit a religious place with family members. Control any arrogance to maintain harmony at home, and students may see good results with a bit of luck.

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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
(1/1) / (1/3) = 3/1 = 1/3
(1/3) / (1/9) = 9/3 = 3

BULL'S EYE
ante, neat, pant, pate, peal, PENNANT, tape

STRIKE OUT

S	A	N	D	A	L	■	R	A	N	T	E	D	■	■
E	■	E	■	T	E	N	E	T	■	A	■	E	■	■
D	A	■	S	U	C	K	S	■	A	■	S	■	■	■
D	A	V	I	T	S	■	O	A	K	L	E	Y	■	■
E	E	L	S	■	E	R	E	■	A	T	E	E	■	■
N	O	S	E	D	■	A	■	S	N	E	E	R	■	■
S	■	A	I	R	C	R	E	W	■	R	■	■	■	■
■	■	S	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

FAST FIVE

S	P	A	L	L
A	R	R	A	Y
H	O	E	R	S
I	M	A	G	E
B	O	L	E	S

RIDDLER
Jack and the Beanstalk.
Jack and the beans talk.

QUICK

P	M	I	■	E	E	J	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
B	A	B	O	O	N	■	M	A	X	O	U	T	■	■
S	■	N	■	E	■	P	■	C	■	R	■	■	■	■
E	C	H	O	■	R	A	T	T	E	D	O	N	■	■
■	■	A	■	T	■	Y	■	E	■	R	■	■	■	■
S	L	O	E	G	I	N	■	O	D	I	S	T	■	■
■	■	N	■	A	■	P	■	E	■	■	■	■	■	■
A	C	I	D	S	■	R	A	J	D	E	E	P	■	■
R	■	O	■	E	■	D	■	■	■	M	■	■	■	■
F	U	N	W	O	R	L	D	■	N	A	P	S	■	■
S	■	I	■	O	■	L	■	E	■	I	■	■	■	■
U	P	D	A	T	E	■	V	I	R	G	I	L	■	■
G	A	■	A	N	D	E	S	■	A	■	I	■	■	■
O	N	E	S	■	K	E	N	■	R	H	E	A	■	■
V	I	L	L	A	■	K	■	G	A	B	I	N	■	■
S	■	A	I	R	C	R	E	W	■	R	■	■	■	■
N	O	S	E	D	■	A	■	S	N	E	E	R	■	■
E	E	L	S	■	E	R	E	■	A	T	E	E	■	■
D	A	■	S	U	C	K	S	■	A	■	S	■	■	■
M	I	R	A	G	E	■	S	E	A	D	O	G	■	■
A	■	I	■	U	N	A	P	T	■	I	■	E	■	■
S	A	N	D	A	L	■	R	A	N	T	E	D	■	■

QUOTE UNCODE
A true friend never gets in your way unless you happen to be going down.

MENSA PUZZLE
step CHILD proof fire POWER boat star BOARD walk stock YARD master

SUDOKU

1	7	2	6	9	4	8	5	3
8	3	6	1	2	5	7	4	9
5	4	9	8	7	3	6	1	2
3	2	4	7	1	6	9	8	5
7	5	1	9	3	8	2	6	4
6	9	8	5	4	2	1	3	7
4	1	7	3	8	9	5	2	6
9	6	3	2	5	1	4	7	8
2	8	5	4	6	7	3	9	1

ALPHA TRIANGLE
P, Pa, Lap, Pale, Lapse, Sample, Impaples.

LOOP
GO FIGURE
Easy
7 + 9 - 2 - 8 = 6
Medium
8 / 2 + 6 + 6 = 16
Hard
2 + 8 x 2 + 9 = 29

KAKURO

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NO HURRY AT ALL

Bhumi reveals she will marry but only when she meets the right person

Bhumi Pednekar recently shared her insights on love and relationships, highlighting what truly matters to her. Known for her straightforward attitude, Bhumi revealed that personality outweighs looks, and kindness is her ideal 'type.' She also emphasised how embracing self-acceptance has helped her build deeper, more genuine connections.

On the new episode of Tinder Swipe Ride, Bhumi opened up about love and marriage. The actress shared her view that love is about finding the right partner, not following a set timeline. She expressed, "I definitely want marriage, but only with the right person—I never want to be in an unhappy relationship again."

Bhumi added, "I'm in no rush; whether it happens tomorrow, ten years, or even twenty years from now, it has to be the right person." Bhumi recently had a lively beach getaway in Goa with Rhea Kapoor and her husband, Karan Boolani. The actress treated fans to glimpses of her vacation on social media, showcasing her stylish poolside bikini looks, delicious food indulgences, and sunny beach moments.

On the work front, she recently finished filming her web series Daldal, where she takes on the role of Rita, a determined cop challenging stereotypes in a male-dominated field. Her last film, Bhakshak, in which she portrayed a journalist, is currently streaming on Netflix and has earned her praise for a powerful performance.

Bhumi is set to star in Mudassar Aziz's Mere Husband Ki Biwi, sharing the screen with Arjun Kapoor and Rakul Preet Singh. She'll also appear in Netflix's upcoming romance series The Royals, featuring a stellar cast including Ishaan Khatter, Zeenat Aman, Nora Fatehi, and Milind Soman.

—ETimes

There are no laughs in this love story

Sangeetha Santhosha

2.5 RATING ★★½☆☆

- **DIRECTOR** Siddu S
- **ACTORS** Arnav Vinay, Rani Warad, Doddanna, Nakshatra Naina, Avinash, Vanishree, Layendra
- **Duration** 131 minutes
- **Certification** U

This is Siddu S' first film as a director and producer in Sandalwood. Siddu, an entrepreneur in the city, says he wrote the script during the lockdown as he did not want to sit idle. Siddu has tried with this film to convey a message to the society on how drugs ruin the lives of youth and how innocent people are punished for no fault of theirs.

The movie is about caterers Santosh (Arnav Vinay) and Sanvi (Rani Warad) who compete with each other to get catering contracts in the city. Both try to outwit each other to earn name and fame. They also get a chance to do catering abroad. At this juncture, the director introduces a flashback showing Santosh and Sanvi as classmates. Both fall in love. After graduation, Santosh joins a software company owned by Avinash (Avinash). Once Santosh has to take Avinash's daughter shopping on his two-wheeler and she falls in love with him. Santosh marries Sanvi. What happens to Santosh and Sanvi is what Santosha Sangeetha is all about.

It is nice to see Arnav Vinay and Rani Warad, a couple in real life, as a couple on the silver screen. Both have appreciable acting skills. Avinash, as a concerned father, is convincing. Veteran actor Doddanna failed to entertain audiences with his dialogues and gestures. He appears in a few scenes and looks stoic.

As far as comedy scenes are concerned, they serve no purpose. It is not clear why the director included such scenes that do nothing to lighten up the mood. The airport scene in the US during the lockdown is far from convincing. Santosha Sangeetha would have been a good entertainment if its runtime were reduced by 10 to 15 minutes, preferably minus the comedy scenes.

You can give this film a miss if you have other plans.

—Y Maheswara Reddy

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100% FREEZE DRIED COFFEE
HEAVENLY AROMA
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DELICIOUS DOWN TO THE LAST SIP
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